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Testimony Assembly Bill 666
Assembly Committee on Transportation
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Michael Richards, Manager of Government Affairs

Chairman Steinbrink and members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to testify today on behalf of Assembly Bill 666, which creates a Harley-Davidson branded automobile and truck license plate to support motorcycle safety and the Share the Road program in Wisconsin. My name is Michael Richards, and I serve as the Manager of Government Affairs for Harley-Davidson Motor Company.

From our entrepreneurial beginnings in a ten by fifteen wood shed Harley-Davidson has become one of the most recognizable and iconic brands in the World. Over the years we have seen low points and have celebrated our many high points, but through it all we have continued to make great motorcycles and attract new audiences who want to be a part of the mystique and feel the independence our brand is synonymous with.

Since those early days in 1903 when four ambitious men set about building a dream, Harley-Davidson continues to call Milwaukee and Wisconsin its home. The wood shed may now be gone, but we strive everyday to fulfill dreams.

Through the years Harley-Davidson has been committed to the sport of motorcycling from promoting leisurely scenic rides, motorcycle rallies and our long history of off-road racing. With our presence as a leading manufacturer in the motorcycling community and our iconic brand we have a fiduciary responsibility as a good corporate citizen to actively promote motorcycle safety.

With that said, Harley-Davidson is the only nationwide provider of motorcycle safety training, called Rider's Edge, through a good number of our independently owned dealerships in our network. Since 2000, we have been proud to train over 200,000 students nationwide through both our novice and our experienced training courses. All of these efforts have been done without taking any state subsidies for training.

Adding to the efforts of promoting motorcycle safety, we are excited about the opportunity to lend our brand to the state of Wisconsin through the creation of an automobile and truck license plate—similar to the Green Bay Packer license plate—which will provide much needed visibility and revenue to Wisconsin's Share the Road program.

Specifically, the revenue generated from the sale of the new Harley-Davidson branded plate would be transferred to a new account for motorcycle, moped, and motor bicycle safety within the Department of Transportation. There are four main eligible uses for the funds in this account. They include:

- Making grants for providing motorcycle safety training courses;
- Evaluation of safety training course, which includes quality assurance audits;
- Conducting public workshops, including attendance at rallies;
- For program related to motorcycle safety and training.

We appreciate Wisconsin's current emphasis on motorcycle safety, and road safety in general. With the passage of Assembly Bill 666, the state will have more resources and shine a brighter light on the efforts of the Share the Road program. After all, motorcycling plays a major role in our state's

economy. Tourists flock to our great scenic roadways, they stop at places like our Museum and manufacturing sites in the Milwaukee area and in Tomahawk, and take in all that Wisconsin has to offer. To that end, it is important to ensure all users of our roadways are aware of their surrounding, that they seeing and being seen, and understand that there are other users on the road, like motorcycles. We want to everyone to have a positive experience when traveling on the roadways of Wisconsin.

On behalf of Harley-Davidson, I want to thank you for your consideration of Assembly Bill 666.